All members of the public should have an equal chance to vote for public officials, and to send their children to good public schools and to contribute their talents to the public good.

I am NASA
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I am the National Aeronautics and Space Administration
I started here at JPL NASA in nineteen eighty-nine, January nineteen eighty-nine so I've been here about 25 years now.
I began working for NASA at Johnson Space Center...in gosh in nineteen sixty-nine.

I first came to NASA the summer of nineteen eighty.

When I was selected second group of space shuttle astronauts

I started working at NASA Goddard Space Flight Center in nineteen sixty four

I started working for NASA at the John F. Kennedy Space Center in September of nineteen seventy three

I started working for NASA at the Johnson Space Center in Houston Texas in nineteen eighty one

I've had numerous jobs and numerous activities that have supported in the last twenty-five years or so

I began as a thermal analysts looking at going to Mars back in nineteen ninety

Working for NASA has kinda always been a dream of mine.
I'd study distant galaxies using the Hubble telescope and so to be able to Goddard and work there.

not only in studying astronomy but also in working on the James Webb Space Telescope.

has been really great.

When I came to KSC there were very few African Americans employees of any sort, the Civil Rights Act of nineteen sixty four was rather new on the horizon of course as with any new legislation there was some resistance to it.

When I first started you have to realize that was when the Civil Rights Act was first enacted.

and things were different at that time like in the sixties things were much different.

At that time minorities specifically African Americans were the ones that were included.

in the Civil Rights Act of nineteen sixty four it was later on that amended to include other minorities groups Asians, Hispanic Americans and women.
There was quite a jump in the number of women in professional areas around nineteen sixty-five.

NASA was part of the Women's Movement generally and made a determined effort to bring in more women professionals.

When I started working for NASA I was the only engineer in our division that was female and one of the few blacks and it was really funny because the fellas didn't know quite what to do with the one woman in the group.

I started off in electrical engineering and moved into mechanical engineering unknowingly.

that I was a minority at the time.

I guess I didn't discover that until I started working here at Glenn Research Centers that being a Native American woman engineer was a minority.

Discrimination is where a person is ostracized and marginalized or just is not treated fairly.
The common theme is, they're treated differently because of reasons beyond their control.

The focusing was initially on African American there were very few African Americans at KSC at the time and those who were here were consecrated in clerical positions and administrative position there were very few engineers.

Everything's changed I mean American cultures change, NASA cultures change it's funny when you see those movies about Apollo 13 and see a bunch of white guys in white shirts smoke cigarettes sitting in the control room...

From the time that I first knew about NASA it has changed exceptionally dramatically because when I first learned about NASA in the days of Mercury, Gemini and Apollo it was almost all white at least that was the only part of NASA anybody saw.

I believe that there was a time when people of color color or ethnic diversity was were not believed to have the leadership skills believe to not be intelligent enough or organize.
enough do those things.

there was resistance because there had been no African Americans and in the space program

and of course they weren't greeted openly they were perceived as a necessary evil in

order to comply with the Civil Rights Act of nineteen sixty-four

So I had a few strokes against me here.

I was too young to be a principal investigator, I was too brown to be a principal investigator

and I was way too female to be principal investigator.

Well I figured the age thing would go away with time and it sorta did.

I'm still a woman and I'm still brown woman black woman.

At first I was sort of a curiosity people would invite me to parties "Look we have one"

and that sorta thing but there were people who were genuinely sure

that I didn't belong there that I didn't deserve to be there
so I kinda made it my duty to prove that I
did deserve to be there by doing good work.

You know there's really three pieces to change
the first one of course is legal

Legal changes the Civil Rights Act again is
fifty years ago.

The second is diversity, which is having a
very diverse work that represents the diversity

that's in America

We have changed a lot in that sense it mean
in the nineteen sixties they were mostly white

males now we're much more diverse workforce

However there are still changes to be made
in the third area which is inclusion we're

beginning to be more inclusive but we have
a lot more work to be done in that area.

Gender equality is a big issue and equal pay
and all the complex issues that go along with

it

Those are difficult issues but NASA is really
good at doing difficult things
When we talk about things like diversity and discrimination and things like that sometimes we lose sight of the bigger picture that we're all in this together.

Who are we to judge other people we should humble our self and understand each other and try to come to a common ground respect our differences and build on our commonalities and that's what really make us a whole as a better community a better society a better nation of course.

When you start to create you want to have those multiple perspectives to give the concept to give the the program you're working on a wide variety of looks so that it can have it's best chance of being successful.

Women make up half the population or so and there certainly as intelligent as men so why shouldn't it be half the working force.

I still believe NASA and when ever I have a student in my lab they leave believing in
NASA too.

NASA is a wonderful example of civil rights in action at Goddard Space Flight Center we have advisory councils for every organization or every group of people that is discriminated against.

NASA has done things right.

The way NASA has approached this has been really good so far.

I'm excited to see the future to see more women coming up and into employment at NASA and coming up through the fellowship programs and just working their way up.

It's not unnoticed we have we've now added several center directors who has been women.

we have had African American center directors.

so the diversity in the senior leadership in the agency.

I'm here
Speaks I think speaks loads to the way NASA in many ways has lead other organizations

I grew up in Alabama where we had separate but unequal

I don't think those students those civil rights leaders and those activists if they were to

look now fast forward They'd never some of them who didn't get to

see the fruits of their labors.

Civil rights is for all of us not just one set of us I think in order to have a sense

of fairness it's that we all recognize that regardless of color or creed or religion and

others we have an obligation to support the civil rights acts of nineteen sixty four

We are senior research scientists
We are mechanical engineers

We are administrators
We are the engineers of NASA

We are human capital experts
We are researchers

We are astronomers
We are center directors
We are scientists
We are Mathematicians

We are Astronauts
We we are

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